

HOUSE BILL 1931

By Rinks

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 15,
Chapter 2, to designate "Bluegrass Day" as a day
of special observance.

WHEREAS, in addition to being a distinctly American art form and a source of wholesome family entertainment, bluegrass music is an important part of Tennessee's proud heritage and present-day economy ; and

WHEREAS, during the 1960's the concept of the bluegrass festival was first introduced, and today, that concept has grown and prospered to include literally hundreds of successful bluegrass festivals throughout the Southeastern region, with many of them being held in Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, in fact, the bluegrass festival, in conjunction with other forms of mass media, has played an instrumental role in moving bluegrass to the forefront of American popular music; and

WHEREAS, the roots of bluegrass music can be traced to the diverse types of music brought to this country by the people who began migrating to America in the early 1600's, from the traditional ballads and reels of the British Isles to African American gospel music and blues; and

WHEREAS, while many fans of bluegrass date the genre back to 1939, when Bill Monroe, the "Father of Bluegrass," formed his first "Blue Grass Boys" band in honor of his native Kentucky, most believe that the classic bluegrass sound jelled in 1945, shortly after the legendary Earl Scruggs joined the band; and

WHEREAS, bluegrass music features traditional acoustic instruments, yet still produces a hard-driving and powerful sound that is carried forward by its unique multi-part "high lonesome" harmonies that are inspiring and evocative of the rural South; and

WHEREAS, bluegrass music has been an important part of Tennessee's heritage since Americas first settlers began spreading out into the Appalachians, and through recordings, live performances, television, movies, and other mass media, this "old timey" music has grown by leaps and bounds in popularity during the last 60-plus years to claim an enduring place in the nation's consciousness; and

WHEREAS, because of the unique place bluegrass music holds in Tennessee's history and the many contributions it has made and continues to make to this State both in artistic and economic terms, it is only fitting that this General Assembly should designate one special day to celebrate the beauty and creativity that is bluegrass; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 15, Chapter 2, Part 1, is amended by adding the following language as a new Section 15-2-111:

§ 15-2-111.

The fourth Saturday in May of each year shall be observed as "Bluegrass Day," to be proclaimed as such by the governor, to honor and recognize bluegrass music, its great beauty and artistry, and its prominent place in Tennessee's proud heritage and present day economy. This day shall not be a legal holiday as defined in Section 15-1-101.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.